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EXAMINER	
LETT, THOMAS J	
ART UNIT	**PAPER NUMBER**
2626	

DATE MAILED: 12/28/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	09/950,028	ITAKI ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Thomas J. Lett	2626	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1)☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on *12 September 2001*.

2a)☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b)☒ This action is non-final.

3)☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4)☒ Claim(s) *1-16 and 37-42* is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6)☒ Claim(s) *1-16 and 37-42* is/are rejected.

7)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8)☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9)☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10)☒ The drawing(s) filed on *12 September 2001* is/are: a)☐ accepted or b)☒ objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11)☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12)☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a)☒ All b)☐ Some * c)☐ None of:

1.☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

2.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.

3.☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) Paper No(s)/Mail Date *12/05/05*.
4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ .
5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Drawings

1. The drawings are objected to because in Fig. 8, "Welcome to DOMS !" should be changed to read "Welcome to DCMS !". Corrected drawing sheets in compliance with 37 CFR 1.121(d) are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. Any amended replacement drawing sheet should include all of the figures appearing on the immediate prior version of the sheet, even if only one figure is being amended. The figure or figure number of an amended drawing should not be labeled as "amended." If a drawing figure is to be canceled, the appropriate figure must be removed from the replacement sheet, and where necessary, the remaining figures must be renumbered and appropriate changes made to the brief description of the several views of the drawings for consistency. Additional replacement sheets may be necessary to show the renumbering of the remaining figures. Each drawing sheet submitted after the filing date of an application must be labeled in the top margin as either "Replacement Sheet" or "New Sheet" pursuant to 37 CFR 1.121(d). If the changes are not accepted by the examiner, the applicant will be notified and informed of any required corrective action in the next Office action. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

> The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

2. Claims 13 and 14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

3. Claims 13 and 14 provide a device comprising a plurality of output devices but it is not understood where these output devices exist within said device.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

> A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –
>
> (e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

4. Claims 1-3 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Shibusawa et al (USPN 6,088,120).

The applied reference has a common assignee with the instant application. Based upon the earlier effective U.S. filing date of the reference, it constitutes prior art under 35 U.S.C. 102(e). This rejection under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) might be overcome either by a showing under 37 CFR 1.132 that any invention disclosed but not claimed in the reference was derived from the inventor of this application and is thus not the invention "by another," or by an appropriate showing under 37 CFR 1.131.

With respect to claim 1, Shibusawa et al disclose a method of displaying a screen for operating a plurality of image output devices that each have different attributes, the method comprising the steps of:

performing a logical operation of the attributes of the image output devices (system comprises a condition setting means 21 for setting conditions necessary for presenting users with a plurality of printers as one printer, an output capability acquisition means 22 for acquiring the output capabilities of physical printers, a printer condition decision means 23 for deciding whether the output capabilities acquired satisfy the conditions, a grouping control means 24 for grouping physical printers together and a printer presentation control means 25 for presenting users with the above group of physical printers, col. 6, lines 20-29); and

displaying a screen based on the result of the logical operation (presenting users with the above group of logical physical printers, col. 6, lines 21-22).

With respect to claim 2, Shibusawa et al disclose a method of claim 1, wherein the logical operation is a logical product (AND) operation or logical sum (OR) operation (the capabilities are a logical sum satisfying the necessary conditions, col. 6, lines 20-29).

With respect to claim 3, Shibusawa et al disclose a method of claim 1, wherein the logical operation is carried out for every attribute of said plural image output devices (system comprises a condition setting means 21 for setting conditions necessary for presenting users with a plurality of printers as one printer, an output capability acquisition means 22 for acquiring the output capabilities of physical printers, a printer

condition decision means 23 for deciding whether the output capabilities acquired satisfy the conditions, a grouping control means 24 for grouping physical printers together and a printer presentation control means 25 for presenting users with the above group of physical printers, col. 6, lines 20-29 and see Figs. 7 and 8 showing the attribute combinations of printer groups).

5. Claims 4, 7-16, and 37-42 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Yamamoto et al (USPN 6,553,431 B1).

With respect to claim 4, Yamamoto et al disclose an image input device (image scanner 1, col. 6, line 36) for use in an image output system (multifunctional system of Fig. 1 consisting of logical output devices), wherein the image output system includes plural image output devices connected to a network and outputs images on the basis of image data and image output format information transmitted through the network, the image output system further including an image output managing device connected to the network, which transmits an operation screen generating signal to generate, on the basis of the attribute information of each of the plural image output devices, at least one of a first operation screen (see Fig. 27A) for displaying attribute information common to plural image output devices satisfying a designated condition and a second operation screen (see Fig. 27B) for displaying all the attribute information of the plural image output devices satisfying the designated condition, and transmits information on the output format of an image received through the network and the image data to a designated image output device, wherein said image input device includes:

an image data input device (image scanner 1, col. 6, line 36) for inputting the image data ;

a display input device (console panel 9, col. 9, lines 7-17) for inputting information to designate a condition for an operation screen to be displayed, displaying thereon at least one of the first operation screen for displaying the attribute information common to the plural image output devices satisfying the designated condition and the second operation screen for displaying all the attribute information of the plural image output devices satisfying the designated condition generated on the basis of the operation screen generating signal (col. 10, lines 12-25), and inputting, from the displayed operation screen, information to designate an image output device from which the image is output and information on the output format of the image to be output from the designated image output device; and

a transceiver (host computer 4 (see Fig. 5)) configured to transmit and receive information via network 6 regarding input and output devices of the multifunctional system of Fig. 1) that is connected to the network and transmits the information input from the display input device (console panel 9, col. 9, lines 7-17) and the image data input from the image data input device through the network and also receives the operation screen generating signal through the network.

With respect to claim 7, Yamamoto et al disclose an image output managing device (file server 5, col. 6, lines 40-43) for use in an image output system (multifunctional system of Fig. 1 consisting of logical output devices) including:

plural image output devices (printers 2 and 3, see Fig. 1) that are connected to a network (LAN 6, see Fig. 1) and output images on the basis of image data and information on image output formats transmitted through said network;

an image data input device (image scanner 1, col. 6, line 36) for inputting the image data;

a display input device (console panel 9, col. 9, lines 7-17) for inputting information to designate a condition for an operation screen to be displayed, displaying thereon at least one of a first operation screen for displaying attribute information common to plural image output devices satisfying a designated condition (see Fig. 27A) and

a second operation screen for displaying all the attribute information of the plural image output devices satisfying the designated condition (see Fig. 27B), the first and second operation screens being generated on the basis of an operation screen generating signal, and inputting, from the displayed operation screen, information to designate an image output device from which the image is output and information on the output format of the image to be output from said designated image output device; and

a transceiver (host computer 4 (see Fig. 5)) that is connected to the network and transmits the information input from said display input device and the image data input from said image data input device through said network to the image output managing device and also receives a signal to generate said operation screen through said network, wherein said image output managing device is connected to said network,

transmits an operation screen generating signal for generating at least one of the first operation screen for displaying the attribute information common to said plural image output devices satisfying the designated condition and the second operation screen for displaying all the attribute information of said plural image output devices satisfying the designated condition on the basis of the attribute information of each of said plural image output devices, and transmits the information on the output format of the image and the image data received through said network to a designated image device.

With respect to claim 8, Yamamoto et al disclose an image output managing device of claim 7, wherein when all the attributes of said image output devices satisfying the condition are displayed on said operation screen, one of the image output devices is selected on the basis of the output format information input from said operation screen (see Fig. 9A, and col. 10, lines 26-55 regarding selection of output devices based on profiles stored in file server 5).

With respect to claim 9, Yamamoto et al disclose an image output system comprising:

a plurality of image output devices (printers 2 and 3, see Fig. 1) connected to a network (LAN 6, see Fig. 1) that output images on the basis of image data and image output format information transmitted through the network;

an image data input device (image scanner 1, col. 6, line 36) for inputting the image data;

a display input device for inputting information to designate a condition, in response to a signal for displaying thereon an operation screen for the image output

devices of at least one of a first operation screen (see Fig. 27A) displaying attributes common to the image output devices satisfying the condition, and a second operation screen (see Fig. 27B) displaying all attributes of the image output devices satisfying the condition, and inputting from the displayed operation screen, information to designate from which image output device to output an image and output format information for the image to be output from the designated image output device; and

a transceiver (host computer 4 (see Fig. 5)) and image output managing device (file server 5, col. 6, lines 40-43) connected to said network, wherein the image output managing device transmits said signal, and the transceiver receives the signal and transmits image data and information input from said display and image data input devices through said network to the image output managing device, and the image output managing device transmits the image data and information to a designated image output device.

With respect to claim 10, Yamamoto et al disclose a user interface device (console panel 9, col. 9, lines 7-17) for selecting an image output device of a plurality of image output devices connected to a network (LAN 6, see Fig. 1), the user interface device comprising an operation screen displaying the image output devices for selection (see Figs. 9A and 9B), which are connected to the network (LAN 6, see Fig. 1) and available for image output, on the basis of attribute information of each of the image output devices (selection of output devices based on profiles stored in file server 5, col. 10, lines 26-55).

With respect to claim 11, Yamamoto et al disclose an image input device (image scanner 1, col. 6, line 36) for use in an image output system, wherein the image output system includes a plurality of image output devices connected to a network (LAN 6, see Fig. 1) and that output images on the basis of image data and output image format information, and an image output managing device connected to the network, which checks status of the image output devices, and transmits a signal for generating an operation screen on the basis of only attribute information of each one of the image output devices available for image output, the image input device comprising:

an image data input device (image scanner 1, col. 6, line 36) for inputting the image data;

a display input device (console panel 9, col. 9, lines 7-17) for displaying said operation screen, and

inputting from said operation screen (see Fig. 9A, and col. 10, lines 26-55 regarding selection of output devices based on profiles stored in file server 5), information indicating image output devices for outputting images and image output format information for images to be output from said designated image output devices; and

a transceiver (host computer 4 (see Fig. 5)) connected to the network (LAN 6, see Fig. 1) that transmits the information and image data input from said display input device through the network to said image output managing device and receives the signal for generating said operation screen through said network.

With respect to claim 12, Yamamoto et al disclose an image input device (image scanner 1, col. 6, line 36) for use in an image output system (multifunctional system of Fig. 1 consisting of logical output devices), wherein the image output system includes a plurality of image output devices connected to a network (LAN 6, see Fig. 1) and that output images on the basis of image data and output image format information, and an image output managing device connected to the network that transmits a signal for generating an operation screen on the basis of attribute information of each of the image output devices available for image output, the image input device comprising:

an image data input device (image scanner 1, col. 6, line 36) for inputting the image data;

a display input device (console panel 9, col. 9, lines 7-17) for displaying said operation screen, and inputting from said operation screen, information indicating image output devices for outputting images and image output format information for images to be output from said designated image output devices (see Fig. 9A, and col. 10, lines 26-55 regarding selection of output devices based on profiles stored in file server 5); and

a transceiver (host computer 4 (see Fig. 5)) connected to the network that requests status checks (when using a user profile it is possible to check the usability and availability of the devices, col. 31, lines 31-38) during predetermined operation of said operation screen, and transmits the information and image data input from said display input device through the network to said image output managing device when image output devices available for image output are designated, and

receives the signal for generating said operation screen through said network (the display screen includes a first window section 45 capable of displaying the plural available output devices as icons and a second window section 46 capable of displaying a virtual connection state between the input and output devices as icons, col. 10, lines 37-49).

With respect to claim 13, Yamamoto et al disclose an image output managing device (host computer 4 (see Fig. 5)) for use in an image output system, the device comprising:

a plurality of image output devices (multifunctional system of Fig. 1 consisting of logical output devices) connected to a network (LAN 6, see Fig. 1) that output images on the basis of image data and image output format information transmitted through the network; an image data input device for inputting the image data;

a display input device (console panel 9, col. 9, lines 7-17) for displaying in response to a signal, an operation screen and inputting from the operation screen, information to designate from which image output devices to output images and output format information for the images to be output from the designated image output devices (the display screen includes a first window section 45 capable of displaying the plural available output devices as icons and a second window section 46 capable of displaying a virtual connection state between the input and output devices as icons, col. 10, lines 37-49); and

a transceiver (host computer 4 (see Fig. 5)) to said network (LAN 6, see Fig. 1), wherein the transceiver transmits image data and information input from said display

and image data input devices through said network to the image output managing device, and the image output managing device checks the status of the image output devices (when using a user profile it is possible to check the usability and availability of the devices, col. 31, lines 31-38), and transmits the signal for generating the operation screen on the basis of only the attribute information of each image output device that is available for image output, and transmits the image data and information to the designated image output devices (the display screen includes a first window section 45 capable of displaying the plural available output devices as icons and a second window section 46 capable of displaying a virtual connection state between the input and output devices as icons, col. 10, lines 37-49).

With respect to claim 14, Yamamoto et al disclose an image output managing device for use in an image output system, the device comprising:

a plurality of image output devices (multifunctional system of Fig. 1 consisting of logical output devices) connected to a network (LAN 6, see Fig. 1) that output images on the basis of image data and image output format information transmitted through the network;

an image data input device (image scanner 1, col. 6, line 36) for inputting the image data;

a display input device (console panel 9, col. 9, lines 7-17) for displaying in response to a signal, an operation screen and inputting from the operation screen (the display screen includes a first window section 45 capable of displaying the plural available output devices as icons and a second window section 46 capable of displaying

a virtual connection state between the input and output devices as icons, col. 10, lines 37-49), information to designate from which image output devices to output images and output format information for the images to be output from the designated image output devices; and

a transceiver connected to said network, wherein when image output devices available for image output are designated, the transceiver (host computer 4 (see Fig. 5)) transmits on the basis of status of image output devices (when using a user profile it is possible to check the usability and availability of the devices, col. 31, lines 31-38), image data and information input from said display and image data input devices through said network to the image output managing device, and the image output managing device transmits the signal for generating the operation screen on the basis of attribute information of each of the image output devices (the display screen includes a first window section 45 capable of displaying the plural available output devices as icons and a second window section 46 capable of displaying a virtual connection state between the input and output devices as icons, col. 10, lines 37-49), requests status checks for designated image output devices during predetermined operation of the operation screen (when using a user profile it is possible to check the usability and availability of the devices, col. 31, lines 31-38), and when image output devices available for image output are designated, transmits the image data and information to the designated image output devices.

With respect to claim 15, Yamamoto et al disclose an image output system comprising:

a plurality of image output devices (multifunctional system of Fig. 1 consisting of logical output devices) connected to a network (LAN 6, see Fig. 1) that output images on the basis of image data and image output format information transmitted through the network;

an image data input device (image scanner 1, col. 6, line 36) for inputting the image data;

a display input device (console panel 9, col. 9, lines 7-17) for displaying in response to a signal, an operation screen and inputting from the operation screen (the display screen includes a first window section 45 capable of displaying the plural available output devices as icons and a second window section 46 capable of displaying a virtual connection state between the input and output devices as icons, col. 10, lines 37-49), information to designate from which image output devices to output images and output format information for the images to be output from the designated image output devices; and

a transceiver (host computer 4 (see Fig. 5)) and image output managing device (host computer 4 (see Fig. 5)) connected to said network, wherein the transceiver transmits image data and information input from said display and image data input devices through said network to the image output managing device, and the image output managing device checks the status of the image output devices (when using a user profile it is possible to check the usability and availability of the devices, col. 31, lines 31-38), and transmits the signal for generating the operation screen on the basis of only the attribute information of each image output device that is available for image

output (the display screen includes a first window section 45 capable of displaying the plural available output devices as icons and a second window section 46 capable of displaying a virtual connection state between the input and output devices as icons, col. 10, lines 37-49), and transmits the image data and information to the designated image output devices.

With respect to claim 16, Yamamoto et al disclose an image output system comprising:

a plurality of image output devices (multifunctional system of Fig. 1 consisting of logical output devices) connected to a network (LAN 6, see Fig. 1) that output images on the basis of image data and image output format information transmitted through the network; an image data input device for inputting the image data;

a display input device (console panel 9, col. 9, lines 7-17) for displaying in response to a signal, an operation screen and inputting from the operation screen, information to designate from which image output devices to output images and output format information for the images to be output from the designated image output devices; and a transceiver (host computer 4 (see Fig. 5)) and image output managing device connected to said network, wherein when an image output device available for image output is designated, the transceiver transmits image data and information input from said display and image data input devices through said network to the image output managing device, and the image output managing device requests status checks for a designated image output devices during predetermined operation of the operation screen, transmits the signal for generating the operation screen on the basis of attribute

information of each image output device (the display screen includes a first window section 45 capable of displaying the plural available output devices as icons and a second window section 46 capable of displaying a virtual connection state between the input and output devices as icons, col. 10, lines 37-49), and transmits the image data and information from said transceiver to the designated image output device.

With respect to claim 37, Yamamoto et al disclose a group registering method for image output devices in an image output system (multifunctional system, col. 17, lines 35-38), wherein the image output system includes a plurality of image output devices connected to a network, with each image output device having a plurality of attributes, the method comprising:

searching for image output devices having a designated attribute (in step 95 a desired profile group is attained, col. 20, lines 1-4); and

grouping the image output devices searched on the basis of information for group instruction and registration of said image output devices (in step 95 a desired profile group is attained, col. 20, lines 1-4).

With respect to claim 38, Yamamoto et al disclose a group registering method of claim 37, wherein searching for image output devices having the designated attribute is performed on the basis of pre-stored attribute information or detected attribute information of each of said image output devices (in step 95 a desired profile group is attained, col. 20, lines 1-4).

With respect to claim 39, Yamamoto et al disclose an image output system comprising:

a plurality of image output devices (multifunctional system of Fig. 1 consisting of logical output devices) each of which is connected to a network (LAN 6, see Fig. 1) and outputs an image on the basis of image data transmitted through said network;

an image input device (image scanner 1, col. 6, line 36) connected to said network (LAN 6, see Fig. 1), the image input device including a image data input portion (image scanner 1, col. 6, line 36) for inputting the image data, a display input portion (console panel 9, col. 9, lines 7-17) for inputting information for indicating a search condition for image output devices and information for instruction of selective grouping of image output devices satisfying the search condition, and transmitting/receiving portion (host computer 4 (see Fig. 5)) for transmitting the image data input from said image data input portion and the information input from said display input portion and receives the attribute information of image output devices satisfying the search condition; and

a managing device (host computer 4 (see Fig. 5)) that is connected to said network searches said plurality of image output devices for those satisfying the search condition, and registers image output devices as a group (in step 95 a desired profile group is attained, col. 20, lines 1-4) according to the information for instruction of selective grouping.

With respect to claim 40, Yamamoto et al disclose an image input device for use in an image output system including a plurality of image output devices (multifunctional system of Fig. 1 consisting of logical output devices) each of which is connected to a network (LAN 6, see Fig. 1) and outputs an image on the basis of image data and an

output format transmitted through said network, and a managing device (host computer 4 (see Fig. 5)) that is connected to said network, searches said image output devices on the basis of attribute information of each of said image output devices for those satisfying a search condition (in step 95 a desired profile group is attained, col. 20, lines 1-4), transmits the attribute information of the image output devices searched through said network and registers the image output devices on the basis of information for instruction of grouping, the image input device comprising:

an image data input portion (image scanner 1, col. 6, line 36) for inputting image data;

a display input portion (console panel 9, col. 9, lines 7-17) for inputting information for displaying a search condition for said image output devices and information for instruction of selective grouping of image output devices satisfying the search condition, and displaying the attribute information of said image output devices satisfying the search condition (in step 95 a desired profile group is attained, col. 20, lines 1-4); and a transmitting/receiving portion (host computer 4 (see Fig. 5)) that is connected to said network, transmits the image data input from said image data input means through said network, and the information input from said display input means and receives the attribute information of said image output devices satisfying the search condition.

With respect to claim 41, Yamamoto et al disclose a managing device (host computer 4 (see Fig. 5)) for use in an image output system having a plurality of image output devices (multifunctional system of Fig. 1 consisting of logical output devices)

each of which is connected to a network (LAN 6, see Fig. 1) and outputs an image on the basis of image data transmitted through said network, the managing device comprising logic for inputting information for indicating a search condition for said image output devices and information for instruction for selective grouping of image output devices satisfying the search condition, and further searching of image output devices satisfying the search condition on the basis of attribute information of each of said image output devices (in step 95 a desired profile group is attained, col. 20, lines 1-4), and transmitting the attribute information of said image output devices thus further searched, and registering image output devices as a group on the basis of the information for instruction of selective grouping.

With respect to claim 42, Yamamoto et al disclose a group registering method for a plurality of image output devices (multifunctional system of Fig. 1 consisting of logical output devices) connected to a network (LAN 6, see Fig. 1) in an image output system, wherein the image output devices output images on the basis of image data, and the image output system includes an image input device (image scanner 1, col. 6, line 36) for inputting the image data, and a display input device (console panel 9, col. 9, lines 7-17) for inputting information for indicating a search condition for said image output devices and for inputting information for instruction of selective grouping of image output devices satisfying the search condition, and displaying attribute information of said image output devices, and a managing device (host computer 4 (see Fig. 5)) for managing the attribute information of each of said plurality of image output devices, the method comprising the steps of:

transmitting from said image input device to said managing device (host computer 4 (see Fig. 5)) the information representing the search condition for said image output devices input from said display input device; searching for image output devices satisfying the search condition on the basis of each of the attribute information of said plurality of image output devices and transmitting the attribute information of said image output devices thus searched to said image input device in said managing device; displaying the attribute information of said image output devices satisfying the search condition on said display input device and transmitting to the managing device information for instruction of selective grouping of image output devices satisfying the search condition input to said image input device (in step 95 a desired profile group is attained, col. 20, lines 1-4); and registering said image output devices as a group according to the information for instruction of selective grouping (in step 95 a desired profile group is attained, col. 20, lines 1-4).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

> (a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

6. Claims 5 and 6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being obvious over Yamamoto et al (USPN 6,553,431 B1) in view of Shibusawa et al (USPN 6,088,120).

The applied reference has a common assignee with the instant application. Based upon the earlier effective U.S. filing date of the reference, it constitutes prior art only under 35 U.S.C. 102(e). This rejection under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) might be overcome by: (1) a showing under 37 CFR 1.132 that any invention disclosed but not claimed in the reference was derived from the inventor of this application and is thus not an invention "by another"; (2) a showing of a date of invention for the claimed subject matter of the application which corresponds to subject matter disclosed but not claimed in the reference, prior to the effective U.S. filing date of the reference under 37 CFR 1.131; or (3) an oath or declaration under 37 CFR 1.130 stating that the application and reference are currently owned by the same party and that the inventor named in the application is the prior inventor under 35 U.S.C. 104, together with a terminal disclaimer in accordance with 37 CFR 1.321(c). This rejection might also be overcome by showing that the reference is disqualified under 35 U.S.C. 103(c) as prior art in a rejection under 35 U.S.C. 103(a). See MPEP § 706.02(l)(1) and § 706.02(l)(2).

With respect to claim 5, Yamamoto et al does not disclose an image input device wherein when the number of attributes to be displayed on said operation screen at least equals a predetermined value, excessive attributes beyond the predetermined value are displayed below one attribute.

Shibusawa et al teach in Table 220 of Fig. 7, showing display of extra attributes. Yamamoto et al and Shibusawa et al are analogous art because they are from the similar problem solving area of displaying capable devices to a user based on attributes. At the time of the invention, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in

the art to add the extra attributes feature of Shibusawa et al to Yamamoto et al in order to obtain a device capable of showing additional attributes of devices. The motivation for doing so would be to show additional attributes of devices.

With respect to claim 6, Yamamoto et al does not disclose an image input device wherein an interface is provided, with the excessive attributes displayed in detail in accordance with an operation carried out using said interface.

Shibusawa et al teach in Table 220 of Fig. 7, showing display of extra attributes.

Yamamoto et al and Shibusawa et al are analogous art because they are from the similar problem solving area of displaying capable devices to a user based on attributes. At the time of the invention, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art to add the extra attributes feature of Shibusawa et al to Yamamoto et al in order to obtain a device capable of showing additional attributes of devices. The motivation for doing so would be to show additional attributes of devices.

Conclusion

7. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Thomas J. Lett whose telephone number is 571-272-7464. The examiner can normally be reached on 7-3:30pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Kimberly A. Williams can be reached on 571-272-7471. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see http://pair-direct.uspto.gov. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

TJL